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10 January 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. LANGER

FROM: R. S. Cline

SUBJECT: NIE-3/1 ("Soviet Capabilities and Intentions") and
Supporting Studies.

The basic National Intelligence Estimate on "Soviet Capabilities and Intentions" should be kept under continuous study and revised periodically. NIE-3/1, the paper discussed with the consultants at Princeton, should be revised in accordance with the comments of the consultants and ONE staff members. The revision could be completed within a week if it is given high priority on Estimates Staff time. More basic revision of NIE-3/1, such as is probably required, must await completion of several of the studies discussed below, and probably could not be completed in less than three months. In my opinion, something like NIE-3/1 as it now stands would be a more useful document to have in published form as the latest NIE on the subject than NIE-3, which is an abstraction from A-BI 14.

Whether or not NIE-3/1 is published in the near future, a continuing study program designed to scrutinize, check and revise intelligence estimates on critical factors affecting Soviet capabilities and intentions should be given highest priority. The long-range program for research, analysis and final estimating should emphasize five main fields:

- (1) General economic capabilities of the Soviet sphere balanced against requirements of the military and civilian economy;
- (2) Current extent of conversion and future economic capabilities of the Soviet sphere balanced against wartime requirements of the military and civilian economy;
- (3) Capabilities of the Soviet sphere for production of selected key military end items (e.g., atomic weapons, guided missiles, jet aircraft);
- (4) Logistical capabilities of the Soviet sphere to support specific military campaigns defined in terms of extent, duration, and levels of attrition;

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(5) Critical vulnerabilities of the USSR, particularly to (a) air attack, (b) economic warfare, and (c) irregular and subversive operations.

In addition, for more limited studies of critical factors within these broader topics, periodical reports should be prepared on (1) Soviet atomic capabilities (including long-range aircraft), (2) Soviet capabilities for defense against air attack, (3) Soviet aviation fuel balanced against requirements, and (4) Soviet submarine warfare capabilities.

Finally, although this is not a continuing problem in the sense foregoing sub-topics are, I think we should have at an early date a comprehensive report on the strategic value of Western European and Middle Eastern economic resources to the USSR in the event of Soviet military conquest. The last report on this subject is sadly out of date. A lot of loose thinking about Soviet intentions is predicated on widely divergent hypotheses about what the USSR would get if it took Western Europe and Middle Eastern oil.

In view of the shortness of time and the fact that most of the Board members have been continuously engaged in jousting with the IAC representatives on Germany, these views mainly represent my own thinking after discussions with Bill Morell and Jack Maury.

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